

## **SUPPLEMENTAL DIRECTIONS FOR ENTRAPMENT AND FIRE SHELTER DEPLOYMENT INCIDENT REVIEWS**

It is the policy of the NPS that ALL wildland fire entrapments and fatalities will be reported, investigated, and reviewed. See Chapter 3, "Safety & Health."

The following instructions supplement the direction provided by the 12/1/95 Memorandum of Understanding between the Departments of Agriculture and Interior, "Investigation of Serious Wildland Fire-Related Accidents", the 485 Departmental Manual 7.3F, "Wildland Fire-Related Serious Accidents", related 485 DM 7 appendices such as "Organization, Qualifications and Training Standards for Accident Investigation Personnel".

The Memorandum of Understanding between the two departments mandates investigation by interagency teams. These teams have been pre-identified. Designated NPS employees have been approved by both the NPS Division of Risk Management and the Ranger Activities Division.

A DOI/Forest Service "Serious Accident Investigation" Handbook is under development-it will incorporate the below elements. Upon completion, the Handbook will be used to conduct NPS wildland fire-related investigations.

The instructions below incorporate National Wildfire Coordinating Group recommendations for "Fire Entrapment Investigation and Review Guidelines", 7/27/93, as well as more stringent NPS requirements.

### Definition.

#### Entrapment:

A situation where personnel are unexpectedly caught in a fire behavior-related, life-threatening position where planned escape routes or safety zones are absent, inadequate, or have been compromised. An entrapment may or may not include deployment of a fire shelter for its intended purpose. These situations may or may not result in injury. They include "near misses".

### Entrapment Investigation Elements.

The following elements commonly contribute to entrapment situations. As a minimum, each of these elements should be addressed in an entrapment investigation and subsequent report, even if the investigation indicates that the element did not contribute to the entrapment. However, there well may be additional contributing factors, particularly as related to human factors, which should be addressed as well: investigation should not be blindly limited to the following areas. The "Entrapment Investigation Element Matrix" may be utilized to expedite the process.

- I. FIRE BEHAVIOR
  - Fuels
  - Weather
  - Topography
  - Predicted vs. Observed
- II. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS
  - Smoke
  - Temperature
  - Visibility
  - Slope
  - Other
- III. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT
  - Incident Objectives
  - Strategy
  - Tactics
  - Safety Briefings/Major Concerns Addressed
  - Instructions Given
- IV. CONTROL MECHANISMS
  - Span of Control
  - Communications
  - Ongoing Evaluations
  - Risk Mitigation Measures (e.g. "Standard Fire Orders", "LCES" etc.)
- V. INVOLVED PERSONNEL PROFILES
  - Training/Qualifications

Operational Period Length/Fatigue  
Attitudes  
Leadership  
Experience Levels  
Other Human Factors

VI. EQUIPMENT

Availability  
Performance/Non-performance  
Clothing and Equipment  
Used for Intended Purpose?  
Other

Management and Command Responsibilities

Incident Commander Responsibilities. Upon notification of an entrapment or fire shelter deployment the incident commander will:

1. Ensure that the involved personnel and supervisors are removed from the fire line and receive appropriate medical attention, if necessary.
2. Ensure the entrapment or deployment scene is secured and all pertinent evidentiary items are secured (in place if possible), particularly fire shelters and personal protective equipment as required by the Occupational Safety and Health Act.
3. Immediately notify the agency administrator and provide details on the incident status summary (ICS-209).
4. Ensure that the involved supervisors are relieved from fire line duty for the duration of the fire or until investigation team has completed its investigation and determined that inappropriate supervisory actions did not contribute to the deployment.
5. Ensure that involved personnel and supervisors are readily available for interviews by the investigation team. "Available" means present at the incident

base or nearby R&R center.

Agency Administrator Responsibilities. Review and follow procedures outlined in the NWCG "Agency Administrator's Guide to Critical Incident Management, April 1996". As a minimum, upon notification of an entrapment or fire shelter deployment, the agency administrator will assure the following activities take place within 4 hours of notification:

1. Complete and forward the "NWCG Wildland Fire Entrapment/Fatality Initial Report," NFES #0869, to the National Interagency Coordination Center-NIFC.
2. Notify the regional fire management officer, and the manager, Fire Management Program Center, NIFC.
3. Notify the NPS regional and local park personnel offices.
4. Notify the home unit agency administrator of all individuals involved in the deployment.
5. As required by the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, advise the nearest office the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) if the entrapment involves a fatality or the hospitalization of 3 or more personnel. Advise OSHA office that a formal investigation is being conducted, as directed by Department of the Interior 485 DM 7.
6. Arrange to notify next of kin of all individuals involved in the entrapment or deployment.
7. Arrange for a critical incident stress debriefing team for the personnel involved in the entrapment or deployment.